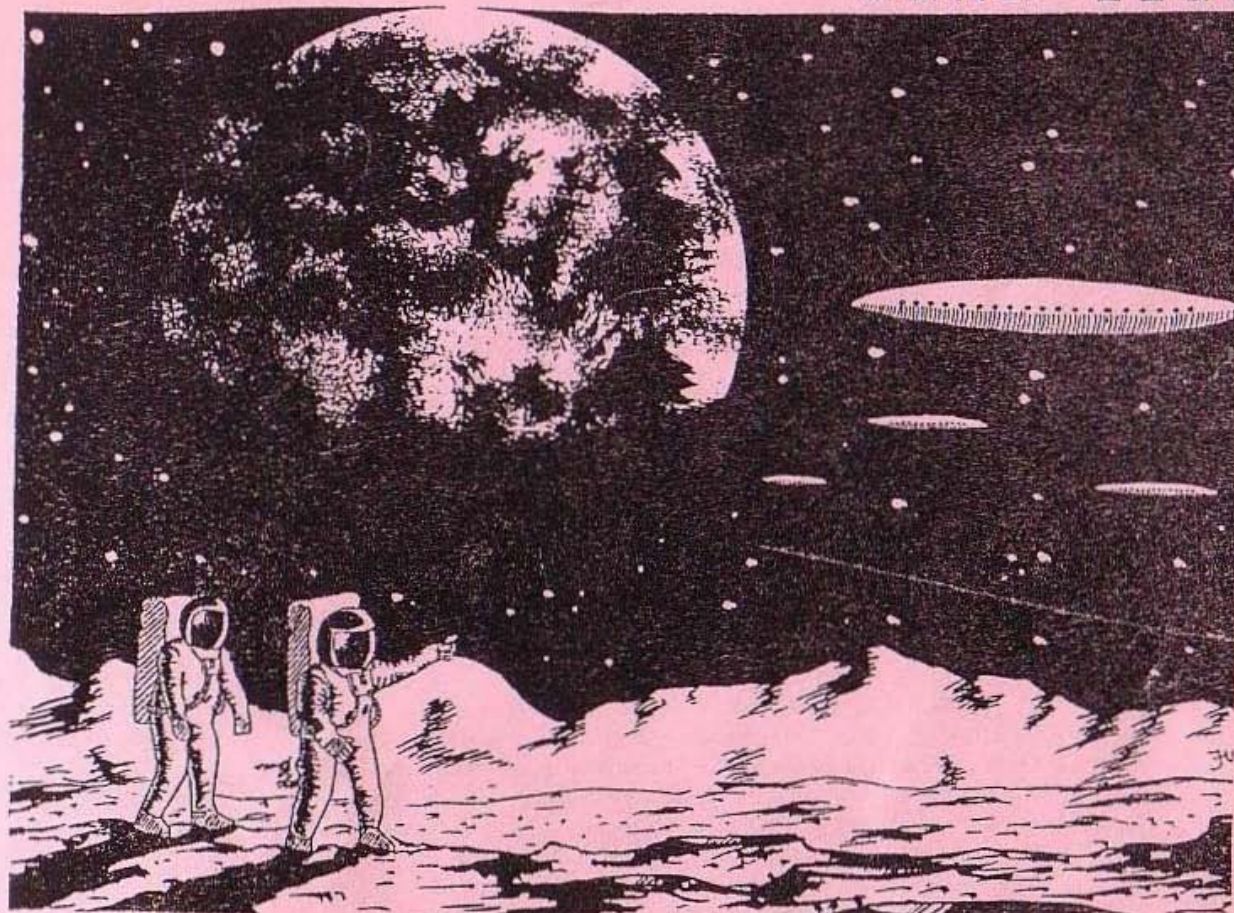


NORTHERN UFO NEWS

155
JUNE 1992



All the news, views and up to date cases £6 for six
Editor: Jenny Randles Cover: Johnny Haudby
Logos: Bill Callaghan

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37 HEATHBANK ROAD CHEADLE HEATH STOCKPORT CHESHIRE ENGLAND SK3 0UP

J. R. Comments . . . On 23 May 1992 Radio 4 aired a documentary long in the planning and mostly recorded a year ago. It was entitled 'The UFOlogists' and took a very different look at the field.

'The UFOlogists' was a 30-minute show which attempted to look not at UFOs but at the people who are involved with them - from the enthusiasts to the professional investigators. Much of its input came from interviews gleaned at the Sheffield conference last August - ranging from staged back room sessions (eg with John Spencer, Philip Mantle, Budd Hopkins and myself) to sheer eavesdropping with the microphone in the foyer and the breakfast queue! This produced a rich tapestry of moments but at times not too deftly woven as the link pieces from the programme's originator were occasionally rather lacking, I felt, and may have confused more than they enlightened.

Nonetheless he obviously had a plan in mind. In the interview that I gave over an hours material was whittled down to 3 or 4 minutes which I was happy with, as such, but which frankly looked very one sided when put out of context. I came over as a died in the wool sceptic bemoaning the fact that UFOlogy was saddled with the little green man brigade. I don't regret saying that. My point is, without the balance of all the other things I said as well (now on the cutting room floor) nobody could gain a true perspective on what I was alleging. The fact, for instance, that I did insist there were real UFOs with genuine physical properties that defied present scientific theory or that abductions were a mystery that required deep study and which could not be wished away as entirely psychological (although they undoubtedly are heavily filtered through the human consciousness which perceives them).

No doubt other participants probably had their interviews 'edited' in this way. Budd Hopkins was even put across as 'Mr Frightening' with motivations that were questioned - a bit unfairly in my view. I suspect Philip Mantle suffered less than most as he had the advantage of being used in small doses at several points throughout the feature - thus commenting on various aspects (with great sense and rationale it should be said). On the other hand, John, Budd and I were thrown at the listener in one swoop - which inevitably meant we appeared to be focused onto just one angle near obsessively rather than offer a rounded appreciation of this complex field.

I had qualms too about the way what few witnesses there were on the show got utilised. Both Philip Mantle and I were adopted as witnesses (although neither of our sightings are any big deal and - in my case - the few seconds played at the start of the programme and never followed up came over as if I were talking of someone elses sighting and 99% of listeners would have not had a clue I was describing something that I - personally - had encountered in September 1980).

Elsie Oakensen suffered the worst. All those who have seen and heard her on radio or TV know full well how good she is at expressing her CE IV in Northamptonshire in 1978. She does so in highly convincing terms. However, here she gave much of it in rhyme - without it being adequately explained why she was doing so. This did little to enhance her story. In this way the most significant UFO evidence on the documentary was effectively thrown away by the production.

The music of Glasgow group CE IV was used well - excerpts from their 'Abduction' concept album providing a (presumably) free soundtrack and - given the amount it was utilised to enhance the mood of the feature they deserved (but did not get) a note to the listening audience as to how they could get hold of it. I am sure that some - even in the stick in the mud domain of Radio 4 land - would have been impressed enough to want to do so.

Criticism aside the programme had considerable merits. It really was different. However much we might like to think otherwise the quirky elements that came over from the snapshots of UFOlogy as they flashed before the listener in a bewilderingly rapid succession were representative of the UFO world - warts and all. They encapsulated the way UFOlogy is, sadly, a mess - ranging over many diverse groups of people with many different motivations. Some quite serious points came over that have rarely had a look in on general 'spaceships are real' features of the past. I don't think we should be ashamed of airing these in public as this documentary did. I believe it shows that we are not all zombies who sit on hills waiting for the next starship to fly past - as I am sure many people still assume.

At least now they will know that some of us are cynics who aren't even sure what we believe and who have reservations about the UFO game and how some people play it. That needed to be aired, just as it needs to be debated.

Sadly, the media predictably responded in glorious apathy. I saw two comments about the feature. The Independent (23 May) called the programme 'disturbing and funny' (now you know what people think of us). The London Evening Standard (22 May) was even worse. The Sheffield conference was - they claim - 'a gathering of believers in the North'. They were particularly cruel to the inspirational CE IV music track ('a dire sounding Scottish UFO-inspired rock band whose singer wails on about a white light trying to get inside his head. I recommend a crate of McEwans Export.') Even the BBC continuity announcer at the end of the transmission could not resist cracking a joke about a programme the following day on how to make wine - adding 'not to say that there is a link between seeing UFOs and intoxication' (course not, hoh - hoh).

On the feature Budd Hopkins alleged that British abductees were flocking to him because they were being rejected by UFOlogy here. That was a point we must pay heed to. It seems true because we have made no commitment to continue our CE IV probing and have no medically qualified psychologists working with us and providing counselling and regression hypnosis.

Indeed, after the programme one of these defecting abductees (Mr D from Scotland) sent letters to the 'Yorkshire area UFOlogists Jenny Randles and Philip Mantle' (cheeky man!!!) calling us 'followers of Dr Jacques Vallee'. I for one do not see that as the insult it was presumably intended to be. He further alleges that we have reserved our position 'so assiduously that (our) formulations have become distorted and emptied of meaning'. He claims that we have 'ruled all alien activity absurd' and allege CE IVs to be 'implanted human expectation or archetype'. As for abductees '(their) intellectual honesty is automatically suspect' (hoaxing is said to be trotted out by us as answers). Philip is accused of using 'rude words' inferring that human 'thought production is infected' and I am labelled a 'cosmic Edwina Curry' (!) for suggesting that none medically qualified UFOlogists who 'mess with (a witnesses) psychology' may cause unknown harm. In fact these people are 'healing and restoring' abductees.

I cannot speak for Philip, but a fair bit of this just does not reflect what I believe about abductions at all. However, I see why it may have been assumed on the basis of the 'edited' interview on this Radio 4 programme.

We need to consider the reasons why D has been forced to go 3000 miles to seek help with his CE IV experience (he describes himself in the letter as a 'time-lapsed member of Scottish research into UFOs'.) Perhaps for all the good points 'The UFOlogists' made on our behalf, it may also have highlighted areas where we have evaded critical issues out of fear. Have we run away from tackling the CE IV experience as determinedly as we should?

NEWS ROUND UP:

:: Victor Kean writes ref 'A rather unusual time lapse' (last issue) 'of course Mrs S found the house quiet...as proven by her digital alarm (it) was 11.22 PM. By the time she had walked down the landing, used the loo, looked over the bannister, had a glass of water and used the sink, no wonder she 'felt tired! She then lay down on top of the bed and the next thing she knew it was 9.10 AM - the following morning'. Could it be *this* simple?

:: Thanks to Maria Kritikos for sending more material on the Aurora aircraft project. It seems that LA has been experiencing mysterious booms and tremors which defence experts allege are sonic shock waves caused by Aurora landing at Groom Lake in Nevada (at the speeds they fly they decelerate over LA on their way in). In the USA I met an aviation expert who has spent much time on the hills around the Area 51 location and he points out after working with Bill Sweetman (of Janes Defence Weekly) that several projects are underway in top secret. Stealth as we know it now was first flown there 10 years before its existence was affirmed and the amazing aircraft of the 21st century are - as a result - already in flight around Groom Lake. The case for UFOs in this area is looking more and more remote.

:: French journal Phenomena has recently stated that 'Unlike other countries - really interesting UFO magazines are rare in Britain'. They praise one 'edited by the dynamic Eileen Fletcher - the Sheffield UFO Group Newsletter' Has anyone heard of this or got an address for it?

:: Would you like to contribute to 'The UFO Quote Book'? This is being put together by John Colombo (42 Dell Park Avenue Toronto Canada M6B 2T6) and he would like you to send him your favourite quotes from investigators writers and others - ones own, ones favourite authors, etc. Anything covering interesting or important ideas, statements, aphorisms or remarks.

:: Possibly the most bizarre letter I have had in a long time comes from a Scottish reader. Over 14 pages he tries to show how a certain well known UFO witness is in fact Lee Harvey Oswald. Oswald did not die after shooting President John F Kennedy. Instead (the TV series 'The Fugitive' has a role to play somehow or other) he was spirited away to a new life after doing his duty. Kennedy was murdered because he knew the UFOs were piloted by angels... At least, I think that is the argument being put forward....

:: The Mar/Apr issue of QUEST magazine (from our old friends YUFOS) is interesting. This glossy looking mag is highly thought of in key American UFO circles. But they might consider a two page article on the 1987 Ilkley entity photograph copyrighted to Arthur Tomlinson and which makes one or two errors and mystifying claims. It says that the hypnosis transcript plus more previously unknown data is published as an exclusive. The case was followed up in great depth by Peter Hough and others and Peter's expansive reports and hypnosis data appeared in the literature 4 years ago! It was also recorded extensively and promptly in no fewer than six issues of the NUN (Nos 131-136) filling 11 pages during 1988-89. So Quest's 'exclusive' seems rather belated. Quest also infer they did not print the photo because a researcher (ie Peter Hough) holds its copyright. The witness DID indeed give this freely to Peter, but he is happy to let UFOlogists use it if they just ask permission to do so. Peter claims that Quest simply never asked.

MORE ON THE ALIEN WASP

Ken Phillips of BUFORA has followed up the alien wasp story that came to us in a letter and was summarised in the last NUN. Basically a near indestructible mini-UFO reputedly disguised as a giant wasp appeared in a house during world war two (circa 1940). Ken wants to add the following:-

'The witness 'Mac' (full biographical details on file) has reported a lifetime of psychic experiences which range from ghosts to healing such that in former times he would have deemed to be a 'Celtic Seer'. Furthermore the witness anamnesis (a sort of life profile psychology study - JR) shows an early childhood family environment which can only be described as horrific (no exaggeration - again the anamnesis is on file with BUFORA's research department and can be examined by serious researchers on the understanding that strict confidence is maintained at all times).

I am certainly not trying to promote these factors as *the underlying reason for the perception of the alien wasp*. If I tried to do that I would be guilty of reductionism and thus hinder any potential attempt at evaluating the overall case; moreover such an argument would devalue the roles of secondary witnesses featured in other areas of the report. No, on the contrary, what I am advocating is that we try to examine the various experiences of the witness *through his own perception processes*: in other words, the psychic, spiritual and social wherabouts of the witness *within the overall experiences that he has perceived*.

CIRCULAR LOGIC

The new circle season for 1992 began slowly with a couple of simple circles in rape-seed fields in late April, both of which were rejected by all experts as fakes (a near unprecedented unanimity!) Throughout May quite a few more followed and the caution introduced because of last summer's disasters was still well in evidence with hoaxing being declared rapidly in nearly all cases (possibly just to be on the safe side?)

'A new crop of fakes' was how the Western Daily Press announced it (7 May) citing a three circle formation at Wonston near Winchester as bearing 'the tell tale signs of faking'. Terence Meaden explained how he thought the tricksters got into the field and insisted 'They are quite obviously not genuine'.

This phobia with fakery is also illustrated by the great circle hoaxing competition to be run in July. The ideals are good but in practice I fear it is an invitation to vandals. The idea is to use one field (location known only to the Cereologist magazine, contest organisers and entrants) and let them get on with their hoaxing. These will then be judged alongside the real thing. Supposedly this will prevent unwanted tricksters taking part. But what seems to have been overlooked is that with a £6000 prize being mooted (according to the Dorset Evening Echo - citing a location of Manor Farm, Maiden Newton) - or a £3000 prize in other sources (assuming these are TWO differing hoax competitions - God help the farmers if so!) then stakes are high enough for would be victors to want to hone their skills. Inevitably a rash of fakes are bound to precede the competitions as methods are practised. Those arranging these contests must take some responsibility.

Surprisingly, the national newspaper The Guardian (8 May) seems to be championing the event - via Dr Rupert Sheldrake, who introduced the concept in the paper. Sheldrake (who had won my admiration for his excellent research on formative causation - as readers of my books will know) is fast diminishing in my credibility, I deeply regret, given the above and the appearance of his name alongside some esoteric UFOlogists, pop star Boy George and a visitor from Venus (honest - that's what the promo says!) at an interstellar UFO congress in Germany this June. How the mighty can fall.

I certainly wrote to express my fears about the dangers of the hoax competition to The Guardian (who in 1986 were one of the most helpful aids in the BUFORA campaign to demystify the circles - producing one of the earliest excellent pieces). They never even bothered to answer. I hope farmers plagued with fake circles this year as the great day arrives remember that when they buy their morning newspapers in future.

Several new books are out or due out. Pat Delgado (interestingly flying solo with Bloomsbury - whither Colin Andrews?) has launched 'Crop Circles: Conclusive Evidence'. Basically a pictorial jaunt around last summer's hoaxes (at least some of the photos are of circles that other researchers claim to have grounds to believe were hoaxes). It is in a way like 'Circular Evidence' revisited.

The Mandlebrot set from last summer appears in full glory. This case has become the latest 'cause celebre' of cereology, as a computer generated pattern that simply must result from the work of an intelligence (no argument from me there). But its proximity to Cambridge University, plus its prediction in New Scientist before it appeared, are enough to make any reasonably cautious person contemplate human intelligence as surely more likely than ET. Needless to say many cereologists appear to regard it a wee bit differently. According to the Cambridge Evening News note on Delgado's book he claims that the Mandlebrot was put near the University on purpose (quite!)...but that 'an intelligent energy force (is) trying to communicate with human beings'. Will it find any - tis the question.

Terence Meaden, meanwhile, is decoding Stonehenge in a new book from Souvenir Press and promising (Bath Evening Chronicle, 7 May) a 'secret study on circles'. This year's programme of Anglo-Japanese research will be kept on the Q.T. for fairly obvious reasons I suppose.

A third book due in August is from ex-UFOIN UFOlogist and erstwhile psychic questor Andy Collins who is promising a look at the link between these things and circles. He is a CCCS regional coordinator and has been warning in the press lately that 'people who have already made up their minds over the origin of the mysterious circles ... could come a cropper... Much more research needs to be done before any real answers are forthcoming.' He adds.

Nonetheless another CCCS chappie, Richard Andrews, has signed on with a tour company to lead £155 a head weekend 'crop circle tours'. The visitors are expected to come mainly from the USA (notably Kansas...remember the song which says 'I'm as corny as Kansas in August' - so where else?) On 11 May he advised the local press that all 16 of the then 1992 circles were hoaxed but that the tours would visit sites which in the past had generated cases in most years.

Finally, look out for the June issue of Fortean Times - re-launched in a new A4 format with a free pull-out supplement giving the low down on crop circles. Paul Fuller wrote and provided a fine basic text, with Terence Meaden and I adding a few extra bits and bobs. From what I have seen this is the most comprehensive finger tip guide to circles you could wish to have.

MID AIR ENCOUNTERS OVER BRITAIN

In a brief note at the end of the last issue I mentioned that the CAA (Civil Aviation Authority) had affirmed last April's mid air encounter between a jet aircraft and UFO (first reported in NUN 149). In fact, I was basing this on early conversations with a reporter and was wrong. The truth is much more exciting - that the breaking story was about a SECOND mid-air incident. None of the media seemed to have realised it was one of two within seven weeks of one another. Once, as they say, may be an accident, but twice?

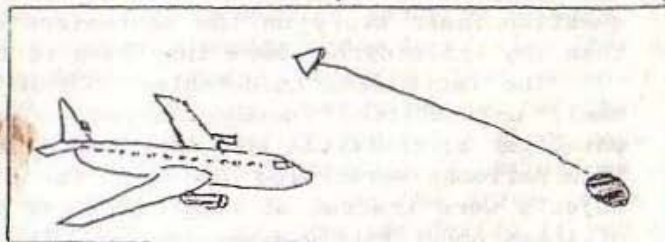
To briefly review the first case - an Alitalia MD 80 jet with over 50 passengers on a flight from Milan to London Heathrow was passing over Lydd, Kent at 22,000 feet on 21 April 1991 (time approximately 21.00). They were buzzed by a 'dark missile shaped' object that was tracked briefly on radar at Heathrow. Attempts were made to establish this was a rogue missile launch but the height negated this. The incident would have been kept quiet but the captain talked on his return to Italy some weeks later. The MoD could only say it was a UFO! A BUFORA researcher has obtained the MoD file on the case (such as it is) hence we can provide these accurate confirmatory details; although most of what we said in the NUN at the time was correct.

Without ever mentioning the above (and you'll soon see why I thought the CAA news release must have been about this previous case - they are closely similar) the second incident was revealed in a report which countless UK newspapers picked up on. Here is a synthesis of the data for this event after we have had some time to digest it. BUFORA attempts are continuing to get MoD reports and to try to interview the crew.

It was 15 July 1991 and a Britannia Airways Boeing 737 was on a holiday flight from Crete to London Gatwick, descending through 15,000 over Sussex. The co-pilot saw a 'small black lozenge shaped object' some 500 yards ahead and above. They were on a collision course and within 2 seconds the object sped past the wing at a distance of only 100 yards (estimated) and less than 10 yards above them. It was immediately reported by radio to LATCC (London Air Traffic Control) and they picked up a target - astern of the aircraft and moving away. It was akin to a small plane and moving at over 100 MPH south-east. It had no transponder and was no known aircraft. No 'impact' or 'wake' was felt by the crew and the passengers were not alerted, even though the pilot had reported a 'high' risk of collision at the time of the event. A subsequent ground inspection revealed no damage.

As a precaution LATCC did divert one other incoming aircraft from the path of the object as it headed out to sea but no reports are known of any other aircraft seeing anything.

Visually the object was said to be VERY SMALL (some 1½ feet in diameter) and very smooth and roundish. The main theory was a weather balloon. One had indeed been launched from Crawley some hours before. But the height and



wind speed / directions did not suggest that this was the cause. Robin Lindsey of BUFORA was quoted in some sources as saying it probably was some sort of met balloon and a balloon photography expert (Adrian Bishop) suggested one of the silvery toy balloons which he claims can reach 30,000 feet. However, whilst they certainly have generated UFO encounters before they could hardly be tracked on radar moving away at 100 MPH!

Despite Robin's remarks, many papers next day carried my BUFORA comments in opposition (although I did not know of his remarks). I argued against a balloon, pointing to other similar mid air incidents. I got space to describe the 1985 over Rendlesham Forest in Suffolk where a Britten-Norman Trislander was struck and damaged by a UFO - actually losing an engine as a result. I was quite widely quoted as saying; 'People tend to dismiss reports of UFOs, but when they come as close as this one did to causing a major accident then they have to be treated seriously.'

The Liverpool Daily Post (28 Apr) went furthest, not only featuring this syndicated interview with me but citing Margaret Fry ('I definitely believe that this was extraterrestrial') and checking with NASA (who were baffled!) and Jodrell Bank ('It doesn't fit the description of a balloon'). Even the Met Office added about balloons 'A cloud based balloon would only reach 6000 feet. It would never reach the height of (this) plane. It would (also) be an orange/red colour, not black.'

However, despite all of this the two highbrows (the Times and Independent) had the last word and rubbished the story. The Independent called the UFO 'a speculative kite flown by journalists suffering a post election story draught'. A Britannia spokesman told them that after the dear old Sun had used graphic language like 'buzzed' (eh?) the airline 'had some pretty hysterical journalists on the phone. They wanted a story about little green men... There wasn't one...' He added that they had investigated and rejected a theory that a black bin liner was caught in an updraft and stressed that the 18 inch size (which most tabloids never mentioned) was the key. 'They'd have to be VERY little green men to fit in there.' The delighted CAA added that they did not mind the 'flying saucer' stories as 'it must be a slow news day' but 'it had nothing to do with anything extraterrestrial'. Very possibly not, but do they deny it was a UFO??? No.

The Times alleged the story was 'silly season' saying that 'convinced UFO believers' were confidently predicting 'a full scale invasion by extraterrestrial beings' (can they prove such a ludicrous and outrageous claim?) The say that 'even BUFORA quashed the excited imaginings of its most avid followers' citing Robin Lindsey as saying 'We believe it was likely to have been a balloon'. In fact (I counted them) Robin's off the cuff remark featured in 3 papers. My BUFORA attributed quotes were in 26. Yet guess which of these two statements the Times made sure their readers saw?

I certainly support what Robin did and know why he said what he said. I am not alleging that 'aliens' in 'flying saucers' were attacking this Boeing 737. Why such a supposedly prestigious newspaper like the Times have to behave like the Beano whenever UFOs get mentioned is an interesting question. Their story on the Bentwaters case in 1983 was trash (far worse than any tabloid). Now here they have to turn this event into farce.

The facts seem undeniable. TWICE in seven weeks over southern England small unidentified lozenge shaped objects came close to colliding with passenger aircraft. CAA and MoD investigations FAILED to identify either of them. Balloons were ruled out in so far as it was possible to do so. And BOTH objects were tracked on radar behaving like craft not illusions. No amount of jokes about little green men or conning readers can change that.

AS NEW BOOK BARGAINS

Sky Crash (£2 \$5 US) Scary Stories (£2 \$5 US) Sixth Sense (£5 \$10 US) Phantoms of the Soap Operas (£5 \$10 US) (UK Cheques 'Jenny Randles' US in dollar bills only):- via 37 Heathbank Rd Stockport Cheshire SK3 0UP

FOR YOUR PERUSAL

Major articles elsewhere



ANOMALY May 92 (£4, for 2: - 20 Paul Street Frome Somerset BA11 1DX)
Good to welcome this twice-yearly ASSAP journal back. An interesting piece on deciding if a case is normal, paranormal or somewhere in between.

UFO Debate Apr 92 (£8, for 6: - 46 Prospect Walk Shipley W. Yorks BD18 2LR)
Robert Moore's excellent last issue seems to have been a one-off but Debate as usual has a heady mix of occult UFology with abductions, MIBs etc.

OVNI (Price Unknown, monthly: 12 Tilton Grove Kirk Hallam Ilkestone DE7 4GR)
This Derbyshire group headed by Omar Fowler produces a neat magazine on UFOs and circles always packed with information. The group are doing some fine work on microwave effects within crop circles.

J. Meteorology Apr (£23 for 10: 54 Frome Rd Bradford on Avon Wilts BA15 1LD)
New research by Kikuchi, Snow and Meaden isolating and photographing a vortex in the lab and a study of a Japanese circle case from Ohtsuki.

The Skeptic Mar (£12, for 6: Dept B Box 475 Manchester M60 2TH)
Whilst they occasionally infuriate most of the time this is a very useful critical look at the paranormal; well produced and much needed.

IUR Apr 92 (\$30 for 6: 2457 W Peterson Ave Chicago IL 60659 USA)
As always a good issue with some interesting new case material from Gulf Breeze, a photo case analysed and a plea that crop circle researchers take note of a Canadian case that in fact we did (when writing Crop Circles: A Mystery Solved) which no Americans, of course, have bothered to read!

BOOKS OF THE MOMENT



SIGNIFICANCE OF BENT STEMS IN CROP CIRCLES by Omar Fowler 10pp Illus/photos
£6.50 from 12 Tilton Grove Kirk Hallam Ilkestone Derbyshire DE7 4GR

The only thing wrong with this publication, in my view, is its excessive cost. A brief review of the Derbyshire group's reasons for thinking that microwave radiation causes standing crops in circles that are slightly bent over, it is undoubtedly useful research that should be encouraged. Presumably your £6.50 goes some way towards paying for that to continue, which is a point to bear in mind. In return you get a three page A4 summary of the project and seven other pages of diagrams, illustrations and some close up colour photographs. These probably cause the price to be so high. It is undoubtedly interesting work but only you can decide if you can afford 65p per sheet to hear about it.

JOURNAL OF UFO STUDIES 3 (1991) Ed by Michael Swords, CUFOS, USA 1992 184pp
\$18 US, surface mail from: - 2457 West Peterson Ave Chicago IL 60659 USA

About £10 to receive this A5 publication is undoubtedly good value.

This is the third approximately annual issue of the worlds only refereed UFO journal, with content scrutinised by a team of scientists and comprising in each full book-length report several significant detailed papers and debates on set topics.

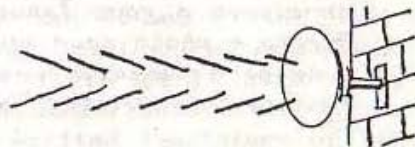
The main theme of this edition seems to be abductions with a 60pp paper by Eddie Bullard assessing the history of UFOs and abductions in connection with folklore, a statistical study of psycho-social characteristics of CE IV witnesses from Mark Rodeghier and others and a case review of a double abduction from late 1989 told in some depth by John Carpenter. All individually very worthwhile stuff and adding to our knowledge of the subject in no small measure; although the isolationism of the typical US researcher does still show through on occasions.

There is also an update on the landing trace analysis from the famous Delphos, Kansas saga (that seems to have been running as long as the Old Testament) and a liberal sprinkling (over 40 pages of them!) of long drawn out and often well argued letters debating various points from previous editions ranging over topics like earthlights, post traumatic stress, fantasy prone studies and Kenneth Ring's imaginal research (see next issue of NUN for a review of Dr Ring's quite superb and important new book linking abductees and near death experients via a common denominator).

Is this Journal to be classed as a magazine? It is more an annual review book than a rival UFO Times or MUFON Journal and as such is far more relevant to real UFOlogy than Tim Good's annuals are. But as a magazine few would dispute it is the most significant publication presently on regular offer to UFOlogists. If you reckon you are a serious researcher and don't read this - you're wrong... Get that US dollar cheque off post haste.

MEDIA MATTERS

A look at UFOs in the public eye



Scientists with extreme ideas have been in the news a lot. Nicholas Humphrey, a sceptic who will study why people still believe in the paranormal when there is so little evidence has received a £100,000 four year grant to be a professional parapsychologist - kicking up quite a fuss in the highbrow press. Even Bernard Levin wrote a piece criticising this and comparing Nicholas with Adrian Berry (not meant as a vote of confidence I suspect). I do NOT oppose sceptical research. Indeed I applaud it when it is done objectively, as I hope it will be here. But all you need to do to see what I fear about this appointment is read pages 168-171 of 'From out of the Blue'. Look at the unbelievably dire report Humphrey presented about the Bentwaters case on his Channel 4 TV programme four years ago. Even the News of the World did better! I hope his full time grant will wake up his methodology from that evidenced by this biased look at a major UFO case.

Meanwhile the Scotsman (18 Apr) featured a report on an international science festival in Edinburgh where Professor John Durrant aimed to 'debunk some of popular science's most well-known theories... He pinpointed UFOs as a field in which pseudo-scientists were most likely to operate and warned people not to be fooled by large amounts of evidence... 2500 unreliable reports do not add force to a theory... The professor (also) dismissed the crop circle phenomenon as 'the work of men with sticks and ropes'...

In hands such as these does the future of science repose.... Amen.

Journalists are even lower in my estimation. In late March a case was channelled through via Jodrell Bank. It sounded like another of many airship sightings but we were reliably informed the Daily Star airship had gone (thank goodness!). Whilst Roy Sandbach chased the airport for help I spoke to a friend on the local Stockport paper to ask if they had had any reports, explaining that if it was the airship we would expect some. They hadn't but wanted to speak to the witness. I said that if we established the case was up to anything and if the witness agreed I would put them in touch. However, within the hour we discovered that it WAS an airship from another source and I immediately called the paper and told them this. They were disappointed but philosophical. They certainly did NOT know the truth.

Did we get a nice article showing how UFOlogists do their jobs? No chance. We got 'starship mystery finally solved' (Stockport Express 1 April) and the claim that UFO experts were 'flummoxed' until 'it was revealed' as an airship (carefully avoiding saying by whom - so leading the reader to presume it was by anyone BUT us). Then 'after the flying machine's true identity was revealed' there were comments from UFOlogists about naughty airships. The whole tone of the article lead readers to believe that UFO investigators were gullible, may even have made them think the paper solved the riddle and utterly misrepresented what took place - which was that typical investigation by hard working UFOlogists resolved this as an IFO.

A lesson to you all. Even if a journalist claims to be your friend - keep away from them. Many seem to have an odd comprehension of fair play.

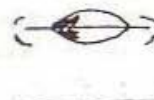
The Exeter Express (29 Apr) had an interesting piece reporting how 'guilty teacher Martin Chapple' was finally revealing his schoolboy prank in 1967. When aged 10 he and a gang of lads claimed a sighting at Pinhoe which became part of the Devon wave folklore from the UFO invasion of Britain that year. Sadly, it was - as he puts it - 'porkies, certainly so far as I was concerned' (*Ed's translation for none UK residents... 'porkies' = 'pork pies' ie in rhyming slang - lies*)

And with absolutely no connection whatsoever to the above the Sport (23 Apr) finally broke their long UFO silence with 'UFO snatches plane' and the claim that on October 21 last year pilot Laurence Stapleton from Australia disappeared after making a radio report that he had encountered odd green lights. UFO experts are still trying to work out what happened.

Lets leave that to UFOlogists from Oz but I rather doubt such a case did occur. It bears an uncanny similarity to the well known tale of Frederick Valentich whose disappearance was indeed on October 21 but was definitely NOT last year - it was in 1978... Pure coincidence, of course.

BRIEF CASES

Some current investigations



Summer 1964 Cardiff South Wales Investigation by Kerry Blower A6-6

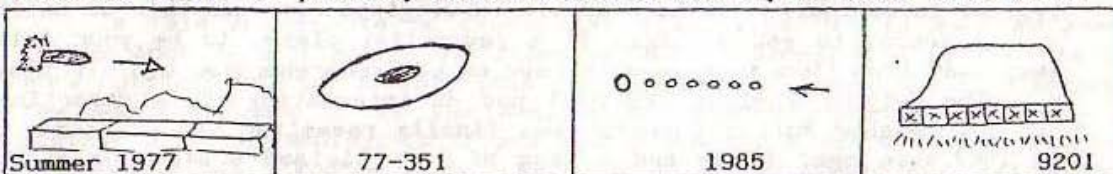
Woman woke husband at 01.00 to say she had heard 'plane crashing'. He went out of caravan in field at Wentloog and saw 'squeezed sphere' - blue on top and orange at base. Stationary for some time and then shot away like meteor. He thought sighting lasted 30 minutes but when he got inside THREE HOURS had passed. Hopefully some follow up may occur on this incident.

Case 76-182 Late January 1976 Kirkby, Merseyside MUFORA B5-6

Mrs C, a nurse, was returning from work at 17.15 when she saw a white 'star' to the side following the road and changing to red and then green. She turned into 'Whitley's Lane' (!) and stopped, turning the engine off. The UFO was still there and remained in view about 50 minutes. She wound down the window but there was no sound. Suddenly another object arrived underneath the first which then shot away very fast. The other object just vanished. Mrs C thinks this sighting was the same night as the famous Shelley from Bolton CE IV which she has recently discovered and she is trying to contact her. But there were LITS very similar to this case seen the same week as the Shelley encounter and identified as a planet. Long duration and stationary nature of this case suggests an astronomical solution is likely here too.

Summer 1977 Cwmbran, Gwent, South Wales Investigation by Kerry Blower A4-6

Mrs R awoke to feed her baby at 02.20 and saw a white cucumber shape with light pouring from one end travel on a slight downward course fast across the sky. Visible approximately 10 seconds. Superficially resembles a bright fireball meteor or possibly satellite debris reentry. No exact date known.



Case 77-351 Oct 1977 Chester-le-Street, Durham Paul Allison C5-6

Mrs B, a teacher, was looking through her bungalow window speculating on Silver Jubilee bonfires when she saw an object stationary in the west. It was tilted at an angle, dish shaped with a more solid white light in the centre. She watched it a couple of minutes and called to Mr B to come but by the time he arrived it had vanished. This it did by growing brighter, tilting more and 'imploding' on itself. She came into contact via an advert in an SF magazine and her letter and subsequent report form use almost word for word descriptions of the event; unusual enough to be worth mentioning.

THE NIGHT THE PIER SHOOK Report on Case 7929 by Joe Dormer of FUFOIG

On 24 February 1979 at around 02.00 - 03.00 there was a spectacular series of linked UFO events in north-west England. They began with an object seeming to land in a quarry at Bacup, Lancs, witnessed by Mike Sacks (it triggered his involvement in the field). Many other witnesses saw an orange ball of light as it tracked westwards, cutting the coast near Southport. There is some evidence that military jets chased it out to sea (a caravan park at Scarisbrick was damaged and then MP - now TV star - Robert Kilroy Silk actually posed questions in the house about it - see 'Pennine UFO Mystery' pp 60-69 for a detailed report on this important case). One witness who came forward was a security guard on Blackpool's central pier. Although he offered limited aid then he has now contacted FUFOIG and given them a full description of what he observed. This began at about 02.30 when the pier shook as if a heavy sea swell or earth tremor. It did so intermittently until about 03.00 (Mr C's letter to me at the time said

03.15) when a very loud roar like a jet was heard for a few seconds. Looking out to sea in the south was a large orange globe about the size of the full moon, now silent and stationary. Running outside Mr C watched it for 90 seconds until it just vanished. Two cleaners ran over to him. They had heard the noise from the room where they worked and felt the shaking but saw nothing. They took him back to see Weekend magazine they were reading at the time. It included a story about an orange light over Blackpool pier ten years before. FUF0IG have checked into this amazing coincidence but can find no such case in the Blackpool press for February 1969. In fact, I think I can solve this mystery, which seems to be slightly distorted due to the passage of time. There WAS a story about me in Titbits magazine that very week (I still have the issue) and it mentioned how I had got interested in UFOs after lights were seen above my hotel in Blackpool (not orange or the pier and 14 years before not 10). I think it almost certain, given the strong similarities, that this article 'Close Encounter with Britain's UFO girl' must ironically be the source of this synchronistic UFO legend. If so it is instructive as to how witness memories can distort unconsciously over time.

November 1985 Great Snoring, Norfolk Investigation by John Copsey B6-6

Mr B who works at an RAF base was called upstairs by his wife at 22.00 to see a white LITS similar to Jupiter followed by several other smaller LITS in a train. They proceeded slowly across the sky for several minutes and then winked out one after the other. We have no reason to dispute this story despite the fact that the witness lives in Fakenham !

Case 9115 September 1991 Hay Mills, West Midlands Investigation Ray Bates

A red light was seen in the sky at twilight descending slowly over rooftops. Investigation showed that the local police helicopter was based nearby. Although we do not have an exact date it seems possible that the UFO was the helicopter reflecting the setting sun.

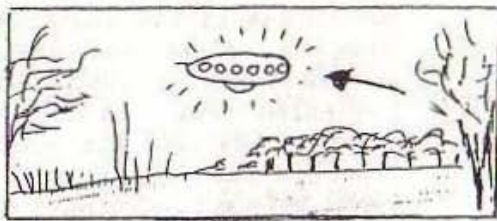
Case 9201 15 February 1992 Warrington, Cheshire MUFORA A6-5

Mr W was driving along the M62 towards Manchester in the vicinity of Birchwood at 19.15. His girlfriend in the passenger seat reported seeing a UFO in front. Turning off the motorway at Gorse Covert the object now appeared much closer and Mr W could see it through his angle of view. It hovered over the Risley Nature Reserve and was dome shaped with a mass of white windows or lights rotating on the base. The object floated into a large cloud and never reappeared. The area sees much aircraft activity holding on route to Ringway. The oil refinery at Carrington also illuminates low cloud. If the airship had been in the north this might have been it, but it seems not and no obvious explanation has emerged for this sighting.

Case 9205 4 March 1992 Disley, Cheshire Roy Sandbach A7-5

Miss B was walking her dog at 20.30 near Lyme Park when she observed a brightly lit 'donut' with a bump on the base and lights/windows studded into the side. It glowed brightly and moved at some speed climbing from trees and heading off to the north towards a quarry. Her dog saw it too and watched. It made no sound and was close enough to be the relative size of two double decker buses. Despite enquiries nobody else seems to have seen

anything. We suspected the blimp which was in the area at the time BUT a very helpful radar controller at Manchester Airport explained that this was under constant control (as it had no instruments). It had definitely landed for the night at 19.30 in a different direction to this object. The witness is adamant of the time of observation, so it appears that we have no obvious explanation for this case.



CASE HISTORIES



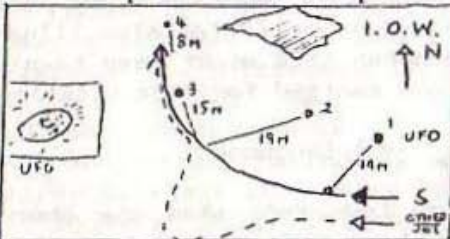
INTERCEPT UFO An impressive newly reported aerial encounter case

S, who is a retired RAF officer, decided to write to me some months ago after reading my book 'Abduction' to report a very interesting episode from his time with 46 squadron. Considerable investigations in a search for records and the other witnesses have been mounted and Paul Fuller has also now begun on the spot enquiries. Whilst these are continuing this seems an appropriate time to summarise what we know so far.

On 30 August 1956 (note close time connection with the famous Lakenheath/Bentwaters radar-visual that month) then Flt. Lt. S was a night fighter pilot with a navigator in a Javelin aircraft and two other officers in a second Javelin, engaged on a practice intercept mission. They were at 45,000 feet on a bright, clear day well above cloud and with unlimited sun and visibility. The jets were flying line astern on a westerly heading some miles south of the Isle of Wight. The other aircraft was the 'target'. Both would separate by 45 degrees, then fly some distance at 90 degrees apart and then intercept using instruments and visual indications.

S - now heading north west observed an unknown to his right. It was disc shaped and his navigator obtained a clear radar return at 19 miles. At the same time S checked size against his little finger held against the cockpit (the object was similar to the size of the finger nail at arms length). Subsequent calculations for the official report came out with a figure of at least 600 feet diameter, probably more, for the object!

With this S radioed to ground control and received permission to break off the planned intercept and investigate the UFO instead. To do so he turned north and the object apparently slowed its flightpath to the north west to maintain station with the Javelin. Meanwhile the second jet had turned north and caught up with S. A visual and radar sighting was confirmed by both its crew from about half a mile behind S. Both aircraft now banked steeply northward and the UFO had now moved to a dead ahead position where it had stopped flat, both visually and on radar. Its distance was shown to be 15 miles by both radars. Visually it had also enlarged confirming this closer proximity. Heading at full power the two Javelins closed on the now stationary object in seconds. At 10 miles it was clearly seen as a rounded discus shape of grey metallic colouration.



At this point S was able to do a second size estimate (it had grown to the length of his little finger held at arms length against the windscreen of the jets cockpit). At a radar confirmed distance of 8 miles the object suddenly accelerated skyward. It did so and was out of range before the next radar sweep and was seen as a blur moving up at an estimated 5 miles per second (ie 18,000 mph!) It did this from a standing start.

Upon landing the four officers were told to submit reports to the (Air Ministry) MoD and advised that a ground radar station at Sopley near Bournemouth had also tracked the object. Sopley was later to become famous as the precise site of the classic car and truck stop encounter in 1967 when the MoD interrogated the witnesses and the road was re-surfaced. Given the presence of a secret MoD radar unit there this interest in a close encounter at that exact spot now becomes much more understandable.

The search for records of this incident have had some success so far, but it seems that the file on the matter is missing from the public records office. Attempts to trace the other three crew (whose names we have) are ongoing. When we have more to report we will do so.

THE BIRCHWOOD MALL CASE (Part 3): MUFORA Report by Hough, Randles & Sandbach

Issues 152 & 153 have carried reports on the video film obtained at the Birchwood Mall shopping centre on 25 February 1991 depicting a soap bubble like object captured by a security camera. As explained our attempts to reesolve it met with limited success.

On 26 April 1991 a second camera on the site, separated by some distance from the first and surveying an entirely different area of the complex (pointing north rather than east as in the previous case) picked up a smaller version of the same object.

The first record on the tape is at 00.35 and it moves about as before; although in closer proximity to the camera. On this occasion the guard was prepared and followed it more closely, keeping it on screen for many minutes (although it does vanish at one point for a while). It is seen to move along a road and some hedges and then finally to climb above the roof of the centre.

Whilst over the road the operator was able to try an experiment based on our previous discussions with him. We had speculated that the infra-red spot beam used by the camera to light up the night might have somehow effected an object to create the soap bubble image. So he turned off the spot beam for a few seconds and then turned it back on again. Frame by frame analysis shows that the UFO vanishes when the spot beam is not being used, indicating that its shape is indeed a product of this system and suggesting that (whatever the object is) its appearance on camera looks to be as a result of the infra-red lighting system.

In the final few seconds of film the object when over the roof (and before it heads upwards and out of range of the camera never to return) is huge. It fills a substantial proportion (almost a third) of the screen. The eye like shape (with a hollow centre) is remarkably like the description offered by the Rendlesham Forest tape recording when describing the object they are observing using an infra-red starlite scope. Is this relevant?

At no time before (or since at last check a year later) have any of the cameras on site recorded anything like this again. This certainly leaves us still scratching around for a solution; although this is obviously not a UFO in any traditional sense of the term. We will round off with some thoughts and viewpoints on what it was (so do you send these in).



Final Words...

Another apology that this issue is normal length NOT 20 pp as promised. This was due to a sudden invite back to the USA for an important event which created a few schedule problems. You WILL get the missing pages before the year is out - hopefully in the August issue.

Some news of up and coming events in the region. This years conference at the Sheffield Central Library has now been set for Sat/Sun 15/16 August. The line up is intriguing. Special guests from the USA - offering very different perspectives on the conference theme 'ET or not ET, that is the question' are John Keel and William Moore. Keel is the author of many seminal books in the 60's and 70's (notably 'Operation Trojan Horse' and 'The Mothman Prophecies' and his anti-ETH stance (his solutions are far more entertaining!) has made him the modern enfant terrible of American UFOlogy. Bill Moore is the original investigator and author of the books on both the Roswell and Philadelphia Experiment case files and stunned American UFOlogy when he admitted a role in disinformation campaigns by security organisations on other UFOlogists. He was also one of the original recipients of the MJ-12 documents. Their papers alone are likely to be worth the entrance money, but there is lots more (eg Paul Devereux on latest earthlights research). For full details and advance booking contact Philip Mantle with SAE at the IUN address below or call (24 hours) 0924-444049.

This years 'Ley Hunter Moot' is also in the north. The Moots are not your everyday conference, I am assured. There will be lectures on various earth mysteries, occultist and ley-related topics and I'll be there updating the crop circle field. Andy Roberts is playing host this year so it should be a good show. Date is Sat 5 September and the venue is the Birchcliffe Centre in Hebden Bridge, West Yorks, in the heart of the Pennine UFO window. For tickets and enquiries send an SAE to Andy at 84 Elland Rd Brighouse West Yorks HD6 2QR Tel: 0484-721993

NUFON Regional Groups

SPI	(W. Scotland)	41 The Brees, Tullibody, Clackmannanshire	FK10 2TT
SRUFO	(E. Scotland)	14 Relugas Gardens Edinburgh Scotland	EH 3 2PU
NLUFOIG	(Cumbria)	89 Bare Lane, Morecambe, Lancashire	LA 4 6RN
FUFOIG	(Fylde Coast)	293 Devonshire Rd, Blackpool, Lancashire	FY 2 0TW
MUFORA*	(North West)	6 Silsden Ave, Lowton, Lancashire	WA 3 1EN
IUN	(Yorkshire)	1 Woodhall Dr, Healey Lane, Batley, W. Yks	WF17 7SW
SSPR	(Derbyshire)	17 Old Quarry Ave, Wales, Sheffield	S 31 8RW
SKYSCAN	(Staffs)	116 Repton Rd, Burton on Trent, Staffs	DE11 7AE
ENUFORA	(Notts)	8 Roosa Close, Bulwell, Nottingham	NG 6 7BL
PARASEARCH	(W. Midlands)	79 Sandringham Rd, Stourbridge, W. Mid	DY 8 5HL
LUFOIC	(E. Midlands)	12 Unicorn C/van, Unicorn St, Thurmaston	LE 4 8AX
NUFORC	(Northants)	46 Occupation Rd, Corby, Northants	NN17 2EF

* NUFON archive files held in central Manchester accessible c/o MUFORA T:0942-604265

You can visit the files by tram (!), getting off at the Metrolink Central Library Station in the Manchester City centre. Bona fide researchers are welcome but calls in advance to the above number are essential.